



CALPEEK

CALIFORNIA POLITICAL WEEK

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MOVING CALIF.'s PRIMARY TO AUGUST NOT A SURE BET. SOLID SUPPORT REMAINS FOR SEPTEMBER.

Editor's note: On May 29th the CA State Senate voted 26-4 to move Calif.'s early March primary to early August. The legislation, SB 1975 by State Sen. Ross Johnson(R-Orange Co.) is now awaiting a date for a first hearing by the Assembly's Election & Reapportionment Cmt. Here's our brief update & analysis...

...The original Johnson plan was to move Calif.'s primary from March to September. But sources say concerns raised by CA Sec. of State Bill Jones (fyi: Jones favors a return to the June primary) and many of the 58 county registrars caused Johnson to amend his bill. At least 16 other States have September primaries, while 8 States have August primaries. The August date gives registrars more time to prepare for the general election...

...Chief concerns with the September primary centered on enough time to print the sample ballot as well as other election materials. And remember: it takes almost a full month to certify an election. Could certification be speeded up? Probably, but let's not forget legal challenges and other things which could cause the printing of the sample ballot to be delayed. And don't forget the Labor Day holiday as well as poll worker recruitment. These critical election elements have to be dealt with...

...The key reason to move the Calif. primary from March to August or September is to *shorten the election cycle* to help boost voter interest and turnout. The gap between the current primary and general election is way too long...

...Assuming county clerks/registrars will eventually sign off on SB 1975, the only downside to a shortened election cycle is that it might favor incumbents. True, but this argument really doesn't fly given the new reapportioned U.S. House and CA Legislative districts. The new remapping plan has very few competitive districts, thus few incumbents are going to have a tough time once they get past the primary election – regardless of the primary and general election date. The only other drawback would be the cost.

Calif. would still retain the early primary for presidential balloting, thus a second State primary election in either August or September of every presidential election year would be cost about *\$25 million*...

...FYI: If SB 1975 is amended in the Assembly, sources say when the bill returns to the Senate that Johnson will amend his bill once again: he'll strike August and return to September. Stay tuned...

CAMPAIGN 2004: THE INVISIBLE PRIMARY BY ABC NEWS RANKS DEMO PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES.

Editor's note: If you're into president politics, then ABC News has something you're going to love. It's under the name of *2004: The Invisible Primary*. The ABC News political unit of Mark Halperin, Elizabeth Wilner and Marc Ambinder has come up with a ratings system that ranks the potential Demo rivals running for the White House in 2004. Here's our report & analysis...

...The current *Invisible Primary* list 12 different Demos who are viewed by Halperin & Co. as the ones most likely to make the Potomac run in 2004. This is the 3rd profile completed by the ABC political unit. The last sampling was done in February. The ranking is by number, with the leader being the candidate who has the lowest number (the closer to 1.0 the better). As the political unit notes, this ranking does not reflect any individuals chance of defeating incumbent Pres. George W. Bush in 2004...

...The current lineup looks like this (top 6 in the front tier): 1) Al Gore with 2.8; 2) Demo House Leader Dick Gephardt and U.S. Sen. John Kerry(MA) tied with 3.1; 4) U.S. Sen. John Edwards (NC) 3.6; 5) Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle 4.3; and 6) U.S. Sen. Joe Lieberman with 4.9...

...The second tier includes former Demo presidential candidate Bill Bradley (7.7); VT Gov. Howard Dean (8.1); CA Gov. Gray Davis (8.6); CT U.S. Sen. Chris Dodd (9.5); DE U.S. Sen. Joe Biden (10.45); and The Rev. Al Sharpton (10.7)...

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... There are 20 different factors that the ABC political unit uses to rate the candidates: money potential; name ID; fire in the belly; buzz & momentum; labor; Demo base vote; Iowa; New Hampshire; and staff/consultants – these are the ones which popped out the most. Gore gets a #1 in money, Iowa, name ID and Demo base vote...

... Gephardt scores a #2 in money and #2 in New Hampshire, but a #1 in Iowa (he won there in 1988). He also scores #1 with labor, party support and consultants. Edwards scores #1 with consultants (Bob Shrum is his lead consultant with Harrison Hickman doing polling), fire in the belly and buzz & momentum. Senator Kerry scores #1 with New Hampshire and on consultants (he is using GMMB for his reelection). Daschel rates only a #8 on fire in the belly and for some reason ABC's political unit doesn't rate his consultants very high, which we don't understand (Karl Struble on media and Mark Mellman on polling are highly regarded). Daschel's best marks are a #3 on Demo base vote and name ID...

... So how does the ABC political unit treat Calif. Gov. Gray Davis? His best mark is a #4 with labor. Davis has better name ID than Kerry or Edwards, but the ranking shows him no better than #11 when it comes to fire in the belly. To quote the report, "And if he (Davis) is truly thinking of it (running in 2004) even at the back of his mind, he can't afford the political consequences of letting it show until the late fall." Interesting analysis...

... FYI: The June 2nd issue of Parade Magazine featured CA U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein on the cover with a story about women who might want to be president. Can't really see DiFi going to pig farms in Iowa, but if we're wrong then she'll have to find someone other than her current consultant, Bill Carrick, to run her campaign. Carrick and partner Hank Morris are already signed up with Dick Gephardt. Stay tuned...

CALPEEK'S CALENDAR OF POLITICAL EVENTS

June 21	55 th annual CA Broadcasters Assn. convention at Fairmont Miramar Hotel, Santa Monica.
June 27	Last day for initiatives to qualify for November 2002 general election ballot.
July 28-30	DLC Nat'l Conversation 2002, Hilton New York Hotel, NYC
July 31	State campaign reports due.
Aug. 31	Final day of CA Legislative session for 2002.
Sept. 27-29	CRP State Convention, Hayatt Regency, Anaheim, CA.
Sept. 30	Last day for Governor to sign bills.
Oct. 21	Last day to register for November election.
Nov. 5	Calif. General Election.

CONSERVATIVE CYBER WARFARE AGAINST PARSKY

Editor's note: As noted in Calpeek's May 20th issue, since about April 21st there has been an ongoing cyber-based campaign being waged by certain *hardliner* elements within the Calif. Republican Party(CRP) who are out to "get" Gerald Parsky, a member of the CRP's BoD and 5-member operating committee. It's all about power: who's got it and who doesn't. A new set of by-laws to "professionalize" the CRP took some power away from CRP Chair Shawn Steel. Steel and his allies are not happy with this power shift and blame Parsky. That's what this is all about. Here's our analysis...

... The email war (sometimes being waged openly by Steel, other times by unknowns under the name of Parskywatch) against Parsky has now centered on the arrangement between Parsky and Demo CA U.S. Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein to appoint federal judges. Conservatives don't like this arrangement one bit and every time something negative is written it goes out to a huge email list of CRP members and conservatives in Calif. The latest negative story about the Parsky Commission was written by Washington Times reporter Ralph Z. Hallow – *Judge Deal Irks GOP in Calif.* The 2nd paragraph of the story quotes CRP Chair Shawn Steel: "As state chairman, I can't sit still and see Boxer and Feinstein pre-selecting federal judges when we have a Republican in the White House."...

... However, it's Parskywatch #8 which has really stirred things up. It's called *Gerry Parsky's Money Pit*. Those behind Parskywatch say the February 2002 CRP convention was mismanaged to the tune of \$109,455. That figure is accurate, Calpeek sources say. Parskywatch claims that a CRP convention normally has a profit of about \$100,000. And of course Parskywatch blames – you know who. But the decisions about the convention were made by the CRP's BoD and the operating committee, of which CRP Chair Steel is certainly a part. And Parsky is only one person on that board. Shouldn't the party's chair share the blame for the fiscal blunders at the convention???

... So where is this leading? As noted earlier, this cyber and email war against Parsky began in mid-April. The CRP's next convention is Sept. 27-29 in Anaheim. Some of our sources think Parskywatch + Steel's own email war against Parsky is all part of an effort to lay the groundwork to *overturn the party reforms* of last year at the upcoming CRP convention, thus returning partial control of the party (especially contribution decisions) to Steel. Interesting. More next week. Stay tuned...

PART 3: ENERGY & POLITICS – WILL CALIF. EVER GET REFUNDS? THAT'S THE QUESTION FOR FERC.

Editor's note: In Part 3 of our continuing series of reports about *Energy & Politics*, we'll take a look at Calif.'s love-hate relationship with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission – FERC. We should note that much of the energy news being covered is showing up on the business pages of Calif.'s daily newspapers vs. front page or metro coverage. Here's our update & analysis...

...Throughout the second half of 2000 (when Calif.'s energy crisis was beginning to peak) and into first half of 2001 (when the crisis hit hardest), Calif. was pleading for help from FERC, but getting not much more than a *digit salute*. During this period Calif. viewed FERC as its enemy, not the neutral regulator it was supposed to be. And remember this: the FERC commission that Calif. hated during this time was appointed by former Pres. Bill Clinton, NOT new Pres. George W. Bush...

...Most sources now agree that since the appointment of FERC Chair Patrick W. Wood III (by Pres. Bush last August) that Calif.'s relationship with this key regulatory commission has improved considerably. Latest headline in the *L.A. Times* (business section 6/5): **FERC Threatens to Punish 4 Firms**. Subhead: *Regulators say they could revoke trading rights of the companies over lack of data on dealings in Calif. market*. In late May FERC demanded that about 150 power firms turn over documents to see if they engaged in market manipulation (like Enron)...

...Calif. Gov. Gray Davis is requesting that FERC require those who manipulated the market to refund \$8.9 billion. Calif. AG Bill Lockyer's office is doing the same thing. Is \$8.9 billion owed to Calif.? FERC's earlier statements indicate that if it were to order refunds, those refunds would be from October 2000 forward – as opposed to May of 2000. This could slash the refund by \$2-4 billion...

...The bigger question before FERC is whether the rates in 2000-01 were "*just and reasonable*." That's the mandate that FERC has in regulating energy rates. The Calif. AG's office says that under the Federal Power Act, energy companies are required by law to file detailed reports with FERC on their prices. This is done so that FERC can review the prices to determine if the prices are "just and reasonable." Lockyer claims the energy companies did **not** file the reports and therefore Calif. should get all the refunds – back to May 2000. Without the pricing reports, it would have been impossible for FERC to determine if the prices were "just and reasonable." More next week. Stay tuned...

CALIF. INITIATIVE UPDATE: 2004 SNEAK PREVIEW.

Editor's note: Whether the 2004 primary is in March or February, at least three very controversial ballot initiatives may face voters at that time. Here's an update & analysis...

◆ **CTA Collective Bargaining** – Don't know what the powerful CA Teachers Assn. (CTA) will call it, but after AB 2160 was defeated in the Assembly, sources are pretty sure the CTA will draft an initiative to let the voters decide whether or not teachers can include textbooks and other classroom matters in their collective bargaining agreements with school board members. CTA Pres. Wayne Johnson said their polling showed support for this concept running at about 70%. Opposition to AB 2160 came from the Assn. of CA School Admin., CA Assn. of School Business Officials and a large coalition of CA businesses. Odd thing is that Assembly Speaker Herb Wesson didn't even allow a floor vote on AB 2160 – so it died without getting a final vote. Although Gov. Gray Davis had not taken a public stand on AB 2160, **Calpeek** sources think he would have vetoed it had it reached his desk...

◆ **Racial Privacy Initiative** – Neither major political party in Calif. wanted this initiative on the Nov. 5th ballot and it looks as though it won't be. Sources in the Calif. Sec. of State's office confirm that Ward Connerly's and the Amer. Civil Rights Coalition's measure failed to qualify via the *random-sample counting process* and thus a full count of all 1 million signatures will be required. That probably means county registrars won't finish the job by the June 27th deadline for this measure to qualify for November. However, it's a good bet this initiative will eventually qualify for 2004. This measure, if approved, would ban state & local govt. from using race, ethnicity, color or nat'l origin to classify current or prospective students, contractors or employees in public education, contracting or employment operations. FYI: Connerly didn't want this initiative on the November ballot because he needed more time to raise a solid war chest to defend this initiative. He'll have that time now...

◆ **The Jarvis/Simon Initiative** – This initiative's full name is the *Jarvis/Simon Homeowners & Renters Tax Relief Act*. By the time you read this, the AG's office will have given this initiative a title & summary and it will be ready for signatures. If it qualifies and is approved by voters in 2004, the homeowners property tax exemption will jump from \$70 to \$320 – and renters will get a healthy tax credit too. Funds to backfill the counties for the loss in property taxes will come from the State's general fund. Stay tuned...

CALPEEK'S INFOBAHN: POLITICAL SHORT TAKES.

Editor's note: Here are a few items, political & otherwise, worth noting...

■ **O'Neill Wins 3rd Term in Long Beach** – Amazing! Termed-out Long Beach Mayor Beverly O'Neill was re-elected to a 3rd term June 4th as a write-in candidate. O'Neill got 16,469 vs. 12,702 for LB Vice Mayor Dan Baker and 6,010 write-in votes for Norm Ryan. Baker's was the only name on the ballot. There are still some absentee and provisions to be counted (2 week estimate), but most sources think O'Neill's margin will hold. A very nice and big win for SG&A Campaigns (Parke Skelton & Steve Gray-Barkan)...

■ **Davis Airs TV Ads** – The Governor Gray Davis Campaign Cmt. has purchased time for a :30 second spot on at least 3 L.A. tv stations (KABC, KCAL & KTLA), according to an AP report. The buy runs June 5-9...

■ **Check Out DC Political Report** – This is an online group which analyzes election contests across the U.S. In its analysis of Calif., DC Political Report now leans toward the reelection of Demos Gov. Gray Davis, Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante, AG Bill Lockyer and Treas. Phil Angelides. In the open seats, DC Political Report leans toward Demos John Garamendi for Insurance Commissioner and Kevin Shelley for Secretary of State. The only GOPer who gets the nod over a Demo is State Sen. Tom McClintock, who is running for controller against Demo Steve Westly. www.dcpoliticalreport.com. FYI: a new independent poll (the Mellman Group for CTA, 5/21 to 5/23, 800 likely voters) shows Westly 34% vs. 27% for McC, with 39% undecided. A poll taken for McC by Public Opinion Strategies (Mar. 6-10 among 800 registered voters) showed McC ahead by a 38% to 36% margin...

■ **L.A. City's Ad Hoc Stadium Committee** – The NFL will love this. L.A. Council Pres. Alex Padilla has appointed himself as chair of this new 5-member committee which will deal with the subject of building a new football stadium in downtown L.A. Other committee members include Jan Perry (her district); Nick Pacheco; Hal Bernson; and Eric Garcetti. L.A. Councilman Jack Weiss recently sent Padilla a letter stating that Padilla's decision to name an ad hoc committee was both *premature* and *counterproductive*. "The NFL needs L.A. a lot more than L.A. needs pro football. By setting up this ad hoc committee we're showing the NFL we're afraid to play tackle football," Weiss told *Calpeek*...

■ **LAFCO Puts Hollywood Cityhood on Ballot** – No big surprise as the Local Agency Formation Commission on June 5th voted 6-2-1 to place the question of Hollywood cityhood on the Nov. 5th L.A. City ballot. The spin from *Hollywood Vote* was very upbeat after the LAFCO vote, but there are serious signs of trouble for backers of the Hollywood secession drive. Anti-secession Hollywood residents have formed **HALO** – *Hollywood and Los Angeles as One*. There are at least 8 key neighborhood groups who want to remain with L.A. More next week...

CALPEEK's NEW JOBS AND PERSONNEL NOTICES.

Editor's note: Here are some items to mark down in your notebook...

● A very sad note: former MCA chief Lew R. Wasserman died June 3rd of complications from a stroke he suffered May 17th. He was 89. In addition to being a power in entertainment business, Wasserman was a power in both U.S. and Calif. politics – mostly on the Demo side. R.I.P...

● Another sad note: former S.F. Co. Sup. Lee S. Dolson Jr., 77, died May 27th after a long illness. He was a GOPer and served on the Board of Supes in the 70s and 80s. R.I.P...

● GOP campaign consultants Dan Schnur, Rob Stutzman, Mark Bogetich and Jeff Flint have formed a firm called CommandFocus, 925 "L" Street, Ste. 1185, Sacto 95814, (916)441-0934. They'll do pr, crisis communications, p/a strategy and campaign management...

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